

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 19470

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AORG IAEA
SUBJECT: IAEA - EGYPTIAN DEMARCHE RE USG VOTE ON
- BOARD OF GOVERNORS

REF: STATE 195323

1. ALTHOUGH US VOTE FOR SOUTH AFRICAN CANDIDATE FOR IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS HAD BEEN RAISED SEVERAL TIMES AT LOWER MFA LEVELS, MINSTATE BOUTROS GHALI RAISED IT WITH AMBASSADOR A FEW DAYS AGO. HE HAD JUST RECEIVED A REPORT ON THE MATTER, INCLUDING WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS THE OUTRAGED REACTION OF MANY AFRICAN STATES TO THE US VOTE. HE EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT WE HAD VOTED AGAINST EGYPTIAN CANDIDATE, ALTHOUGH HE NOTED WITH PLEASURE THAT THE LATTER HAD BEEN ELECTED. HE SAID THAT HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THE US VOTE AND WAS WORRIED ABOUT ITS IMPLICATIONS. IT SEEMED INCONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLES FOR WHICH THE USG PROFESSES TO STAND.

2. DRAWING ON SUBSTANCE OF REFTEL, AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED RATIONALE FOR OUR VOTE IN FAVOR OF SOUTH AFRICA. AM-
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BASSADOR SUBSEQUENTLY SENT GHALI A LETTER (POUCHED TO NEA/EGY) SETTING FORTH AT GREATER LENGTH THE US POSITION ON THE MATTER AND EMPHASIZING THAT OUR VOTE HAS NO RELATION TO OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHER EGYPTIAN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION CANDIDACIES.

3. GHALI TELEPHONED AMBASSADOR THIS MORNING TO SAY HE

HAD RECEIVED THE LETTER. HE STILL COULD NOT AGREE WITH OUR POSITION. WE HAD SEIZED UPON ONLY ONE, NAMELY THE TECHNICAL, ASPECT OF THE ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE IAEA CANDIDACIES. WE HAD CONVENTIENTLY IGNORED TWO EVEN MORE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS: FIRST, SOUTH AFRICA IS TOTALLY OUT OF HARMONY WITH AFRICAN LEGITIMACY AND DOES NOT REPRESENT AFRICA IN ANY WAY. SECOND, SOUTH AFRICA'S ROLE AND AIMS ARE CONTRARY TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE UN CHARTER. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, GHALI FELT THAT TO SINGLE OUT THE TECHNICAL FACTOR IS A REGRETTABLE PRECEDENT IN A SITUATION WHERE UN AND HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES ARE SO DEEPLY INVOLVED. HE THOUGHT IT CAST DOUBT UPON OUR AVOWED COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES. HE CONTENDED THAT IT HAS HURT THE UNITED STATES IN AFRICA AND CAUSED EMBARRASSMENT TO FRIENDS SUCH AS EGYPT. HE NOTED THAT THE DEED HAS BEEN DONE, BUT THOUGHT WE SHOULD KNOW EGYPTIAN SURPRISE AND DISAPPOINTMENT.

4. AMBASSADOR REITERATED THAT US VOTE WAS IN NO WAY INTENDED TO SUGGEST DISRESPECT FOR EGYPT. IT WAS, AS GHALI HAD INDICATED, BASED ON TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND NO MORE. IT IN NO WAY ENDORSES SOUTH AFRICAN RACIAL POLICIES, NOR DOES IT CHANGE THE US COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS. WE UNDERSTAND EGYPTIAN POINT OF VIEW, BUT THIS SEEMED TO BE MATTER ON WHICH WE HAD TO AGREE TO DISAGREE. WE LEFT IT AT THAT.
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5. WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPT INFORMING US WHEN THIS ISSUE IS LIKELY TO COME UP AGAIN. WE HOPE THAT WE WILL BE GIVEN AMPLE NOTICE, AND BRIEFING MATERIAL, BEFORE THE NEXT OCCASION. CLOSE CONSULTATIONS WITH EGYPT BEFORE THE EVENT SHOULD ENABLE US TO LESSEN THE DAMAGE OF WHAT HAS BECOME AN UNNECESSARY IRRITANT WITH EGYPT IN OUR MULTILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. EILTS

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